

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT

CD NO

East Germany

Elementary Procedures

DATE DISTR. 4 January 1958

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INFO.

SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO. 100-100000

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. Statements made at a conference of an election committee on 16 October 1954 clearly showed that it was officially intended to prevent the use of election booths to the greatest possible extent. After the conference of the election committee, there was another conference attended by the chairman of the committee, who is believed to have stated that this conference was intended to work against the SED regime, rather than to prevent a free election.
2. At the polling places, the election booth was hardly accessible and the ballot was to be found in a box. The opening of the voting was officially fixed at 0600, but the first voters did not turn up until about 0800. More than 100 voters in the 18-25 age-group, nine in one group at 0800 and one in another group at 0930. All the other young voters appeared individually although FDJ representatives had visited all of them and urged them "to fall in" at 0800 in order to cast their votes collectively. Hardly 10 percent of the voters cast their votes collectively in so-called "Hausgemeinschaften". It was a general procedure that the individual houses sent scouts who were to find out the procedure of the casting of the votes. The voting passed off rather smoothly. By 1000 approximately 20 percent of the electorate had cast their votes, by 1400 this figure had increased to 60 percent. Of a total of 730 persons entitled to vote, 56 had to be summoned to the voting place, 15 persons cast their votes at home, and 11 did not participate in the election.
3. The voting procedure was as follows:
At the polling place, tables were arranged in the shape of a horseshoe. When the voter entered the polling place he had to present his identification card at the left-hand table, and his name and serial number was marked in a list by another member of the election committee. A third man handed out two ballots, a white one for the People's Chamber, and a yellow one for the Bezirkstag (Bezirk Parliament). The party affiliations were stated behind the names of candidates, the same applied to the organizations to which the candidates belonged. Many SED candidates were put down as FDGB, DFD, FDJ members. After the voter had received his ballots, the chairman of the election committee said to him: "If you want to give your vote to the candidates of the National Front, fold your two ballots separately and drop them

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into the box. If you are against them, return your ballot." The latter was indeed done by five women voters. Ten of the voters went to the booth in spite of all difficulties. They and all the persons who had failed to cast their votes were recorded by observers of the National Front.

4. Those who had not appeared at the polling place by 3:00 P.M. were visited at their homes, some of them up to ten times. Open threats were used against them. Since the preceding Saturday, rumors had purposely been spread to the effect that those who failed to cast their votes would lose their jobs or might even be arrested.
5. The Protestant clergymen, their wives, and members of the union of Protestant nurses (Diakonissinnen), some Protestant teachers of religion did not cast their votes. Catholic nuns cast their votes openly and collectively.

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1. At a conference of the election committee on 18 October 1954, it was decided that it was necessary to make the voting process as simple as possible. At the conference of the election committee, there was another conference attended by the chairmen of the Bezirk election committees. It is believed that at this conference directives were issued designed to make voting against the SED régime rather difficult. 25X1
2. At one of the polling places, the election booth was hardly accessible and no lead pencil was to be found in it. The beginning of the voting was officially fixed at 0600, but the first voters did not turn up until about 0800. Of more than 100 voters in the 18-25 age-group, nine appeared in one group at 0800 and 10 in another group at 0930. All the other young voters appeared individually. The DJ representatives had visited all of them and "fall in" at 0800 in order to cast their votes collectively. 10 percent of the voters cast their votes collectively. "Hausgemeinschaften". It was a general procedure that the houses sent scouts who were to find out the procedure and the casting of the votes. The voting passed off rather smoothly. By 1000 approximately 20 percent of the electorate had cast their votes; by 1400 this figure had increased to 60 percent. Of a total of 730 persons entitled to vote, 56 had to be summoned to the voting place, 15 persons cast their votes at home, and 17 did not participate in the election.
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